

men and women who had the honor of working with her over the years.

I have gone through her record. You can hardly find a single person she has met, as she has walked through life and met people, who has said a bad thing about her. And when you meet her, you can see why. When you meet her, you can see why.

America will be much better off with someone like Judge Jackson on the Supreme Court. Our country deserves someone deeply experienced, broadly supported, and someone whose elevation as the first Black woman Justice signifies a long overdue step toward perfecting our Union.

I am grateful to have had the chance to have met with the judge. I thank her for her time this morning, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to elevate this outstanding nominee to the Supreme Court very soon.

In having met her and having studied her record, she deserves the support of Members from the other side of the aisle, and I am hopeful she will get a good number of them to support her.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on the State of the Union, last night, before a joint session of Congress, President Biden made the case to the Nation and to the world that in the face of immense challenges, the United States remains strong and ready to meet the tests of our time.

In an hour-long speech delivered before a Chamber that was much fuller than last year, President Biden demonstrated, yet again, the kind of leader he has been all of his life: optimistic, unifying, decent, and honest. He is honest about where we are today and where we must go. I applaud President Biden for laying out a bold, strong, and comprehensive vision that will resonate with the vast majority of Americans.

In particular, I was glad the President focused on three important things. First, he united the parties in supporting Ukraine and against Putin. Second, he showed how under Democratic leadership America has turned the corner on COVID. Third, he confronted the urgency of lowering costs for American families, something our caucus has been focusing on.

First, I was glad that President Biden united the room, the country, and the world in opposing Vladimir Putin and his savage assaults on Ukraine. It is obvious that the President has done an incredibly good job in unifying the Europeans and the West as a united front against Putin. That was felt by people on both sides of the aisle.

When the President called on the Chamber to stand up and applaud Oksana Markarova, the Ukrainian Ambassador, the feeling in the room reminded me of the unity we all felt after 9/11. But just like on 9/11, that unity comes with the sobering recognition

that the scale of Putin's brutality in Ukraine is worsening. Ukraine's State Emergency Service reported this morning that more than 2,000 civilians—2,000 men, women, and children—children—have now been killed as a result of Putin's savage brutality.

What is happening in Ukraine is carnage, and the blood of every one of those innocent people falls on the hands of Vladimir Putin and on his band of crony oligarchs. This evil man must be stopped.

As an important step, last night, the Senate unanimously passed bipartisan legislation that will protect America, our government, and our critical infrastructure from cyber attacks. Finally, the holds were lifted from the other side of the aisle, and we passed unanimously this cyber legislation. It is more important now than ever before because Putin is brandishing a cyber weapon.

Cyber warfare is truly one of the dark arts perfected by Putin's authoritarian regime. It is a weapon he is happy to employ around the world. When our authorities in government know of these attacks, they can prepare against future attacks. They will know who is attacking, where they are attacking, how they are attacking, and that will allow them to strengthen our defenses against future cyber attacks.

Many in the industry—at times, I believe even the Chamber of Commerce—were not for this legislation, but with the urgency of the moment—the need to protect ourselves from cyber attacks—finally, the Senate rose to the occasion. So I thank Senators PETERS and PORTMAN for getting this bill done.

The passage of this bill was little noticed because it came right before Congress adjourned for the State of the Union, but it is a giant step forward to protecting ourselves, and I am glad that we got it done last night. But, of course, we must do more.

The Senate must keep working on a bipartisan basis to pass a robust aid package in the upcoming omnibus so we can send an unmistakable message to Ukraine that we stand with them and a message to Putin that we stand against him. The quickest way we can assure that aid reaches Ukraine is through the omnibus, which needs to get done next week; so I am glad that we seem to be having bipartisan support to get that done.

Second, I was also glad President Biden showed how the country under Democratic leadership is turning the corner in the fight against COVID-19. By passing legislation last year to fund vaccines, expand testing, and support our healthcare workers, we are beating this disease.

What the President said last night was absolutely correct in that we cannot—we cannot—have COVID control our lives anymore, but neither can we let our guard down. Right now, as cases are dropping across the board, Congress must pass more funding for vaccines, testing, and therapeutics.

“Therapeutics” is a word for medication that helps alleviate the virulence of COVID. Very few people who take the therapeutics have to be hospitalized. We also have to ensure that our doctors and nurses and healthcare workers are prepared in case another variant comes this way so that we can stay as close to normal as possible even if another variant arrives. We have to have an ample supply of vaccines, of therapeutics, and of testing ahead of time. We cannot wait. Some of our Republican colleagues seem to be saying: Oh, we don't need this now.

We do need it now while we still have the chance. If Congress waits until another variant arrives, it will be too late.

Let me say that again. Even as cases drop across the board, we cannot be complacent against COVID. Congress must pass more COVID funding now so we can be ready by funding vaccines, testing, therapeutics, and supporting our healthcare workers. If Congress waits until another variant arrives, it will be too late. So we need our Republican colleagues to join us in a bipartisan way, just as they are joining us on Ukraine.

Finally, I am glad that President Biden zeroed in on cutting costs for American families. A year into the President's first year, the economy is surging and creating an unprecedented number of jobs. But people are struggling because costs are also going up. Your wages are going up, but if the costs keep going up, it eats up those wage increases.

Now, why are costs up? Costs are up because of supply chain disruptions stemming from COVID and pent-up demand, as people during COVID didn't buy a lot of things. All the while, Americans are watching incredulously as some of our largest corporations are raising prices despite growing profits. In some cases, executives are seeing lavish pay increases, and in the end, Americans are footing the bill.

Senate Democrats will not stand for this, and we are working with the President to lower costs and build upon the wage growth we have seen over the past year. We are laser-focused on reducing America's costs, from lowering the costs of insulin so no one pays more than \$35 a month, to lowering the cost of all prescription drugs, to lowering the cost of meat at the grocery store, to fixing our ocean shipping lines so the bottlenecks don't raise their costs. Shipping costs have gone way up, as the President mentioned.

Do you know what else we can do to lower costs? We can innovate. Congress should continue working to finalize our bipartisan, bicameral jobs and supply chains bill so we can boost American manufacturing, solve our chip crisis, and make our country less dependent on foreign tech companies.

In short, despite everything the world faces, President Biden reminded supporters and critics alike why the American people entrusted him with

the Presidency. He didn't shy away from our challenges but, rather, advanced an optimistic and unifying plan for how to meet the moment.

Senate Democrats will continue working with the President to precisely move our country forward on lowering costs, on addressing COVID, and on defending our democracy in this hour of peril.

I thank the President for his leadership. Let us continue in our work.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

POSTAL SERVICE REFORM ACT OF 2022

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3076, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3076) to provide stability to and enhance the services of the United States Postal Service, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Schumer (for Peters) amendment No. 4955, to modify the deadline for the initial report on the operations and financial condition of the United States Postal Service.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, last night, President Biden gave a State of the Union Address that might have worked OK for a popular administration that had been successfully tackling America's problems and naturally earning high marks, but that is not the reality in which we live.

Democrats spent the last 12 months making major and painful policy errors. The public overwhelmingly disapproves. President Biden didn't need to stay the course and rehash a scattered wish list; he needed to make a dramatic pivot. But he chose not to.

The President first discussed Ukraine. Everyone agrees with the sentiments President Biden expressed, but the sentiments are not enough. The President articulated no meaningful new steps, no specific plan. He made no explicit commitment to keep flowing weapons, intelligence, and advanced capabilities into Ukraine as long as the Ukrainians need them, nor did he explain why his administration was slow to provide lethal assistance in the first place. Instead, the President focused on trying to claim credit for the remarkable European and worldwide response that his administration did not foresee, let alone orchestrate.

Apart from Ukraine, the President's other remarks on our dangerous world

were not just insufficient; they were basically nonexistent.

The President spoke for over an hour but only mentioned China twice. Neither time had anything to do with national security or military modernization. The President only mentioned Iran one time, and it was literally by accident. There were zero mentions of North Korea, zero mentions of the botched Afghanistan retreat the administration originally boasted was a "success." Our 13 servicemembers who lost their lives were completely unmentioned until Governor Reynolds took the microphone. And there were zero mentions of rebuilding the defense budget that President Biden actually tried to cut last year.

Meanwhile, the President's speech tried to skate by the serious kitchen-table concerns that are actually keeping families up at night. The President talked about "made in America" but keeps fighting against energy independence. Democrats want us to "Buy American" but not American oil or gas. On President Biden's watch, we have set a new record for importing Russian oil, and we are begging OPEC to produce even more, and his energy vision is to dump huge subsidies into supply chains that are dominated by China—borrowing from our grandkids to build back Beijing.

The President tried yet again to revive the zombie spending plans which a bipartisan majority of Senators have already killed and buried because they would make inflation even worse. He tried to brag about fancy technology on our southern border, as if we hadn't just seen a new record for illegal crossings on his watch.

The President's address was not responsive to the country's concerns. He needed to pivot, but he didn't.

CNN conducted an instant poll. As you might expect, it oversampled Democrats. Even so, the percentage who gave the President's speech high marks was the lowest they have seen in 15 years.

Iowa's hugely successful Governor, Kim Reynolds, offered the clearest possible contrast. She spoke for the working families who are suffering under Democrat policies. She outlined a commonsense Republican vision of stability at home, strength abroad, law and order on our streets, and sanity in our public schools.

November is just months away. If President Biden does not correct course sharply and quickly, the American people may correct course for him.

TRIBUTE TO ANGIE SCHULTE

Mr. President, now on an entirely different matter, one of the occupational hazards of Senate service is having to say goodbye to truly remarkable staff professionals.

I have already been through this rodeo with Angie Schulte. All the way back in 1988, this dedicated caseworker left my office for the nonprofit sector, but back in 2010, I leapt at the chance to hire Angie back as my State office

manager, and her second tour of duty has been a huge success.

I have known Angie for 40 years now. I have watched her master a wide variety of roles. She is an integral part of my State office. She keeps all of us on task and on time. But, unfortunately, tomorrow, her second tour of service will end with a second farewell. Angie is retiring after decades of hard work and phenomenal public service.

For 12 years, Angie has been the steady rudder steering my instate team. If there was a complicated problem, she would fix it; a scheduling conflict, she would resolve it; a new staffer needed help growing into her role, she would provide it. Angie combines meticulous efficiency with a totally charming and cheerful demeanor.

My relationship with Angie actually predates my time in the Senate. Her mother Jeannette was my personnel director for my county administration. I was a newly elected Republican in a heavily Democratic county government who needed all the smarts and all the help that I could get. Angie's mother Jeannette proved invaluable.

In 1982, her daughter Angie came on board as office receptionist. I quickly promoted her, not once but twice. She served as office manager in my Neighborhood Response Office. When I won statewide in 1984, Angie was one of my first hires.

With the same vigor that helped Louisville residents settle property disputes and parking tickets, Angie began helping Kentuckians across the State navigate the morass of Federal Government redtape. Expertise, an eye for detail—Angie grew into the consummate public servant. Our whole team was overjoyed to welcome Angie back after her tenure with Metro United Way, one of the Commonwealth's largest nonprofits.

Angie is famous for humming and whistling while she works and for throwing extravagant birthday parties for her colleagues. She is unfailingly upbeat. She has a permanent positive attitude and, boy, does she get results for Kentucky.

As you can see, it has been an honor to have Angie's talents on our team. I am just grateful that when her sterling 40-year career concludes tomorrow, a 40-year friendship will not.

So, Angie, I wish you every happiness as you spend more time with Steve, with Kathleen and Becca, and with those grandkids, Grant, Logan, and Elizabeth.

I am eternally grateful for your outstanding good work.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, last night, President Biden delivered his